



MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Middle and High School Principals and Guidance Counselors, Charter School Sponsors, Administrators of Accredited Nonpublic High Schools, College Admissions Counselors

FROM: Schauna Findlay, Ph.D., Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Zach Foughty, IDOE Mathematics Consultant

SUBJECT: High School Credit for Courses Completed Before Students Enter Grade 9
(Please share this information with High School Principals and Student Services personnel who provide Educational and Career Services.)

DATE: May 14, 2010

Indiana State Board of Education rules ([511 IAC 6-7-1](#), [511 IAC 6-7.1-1](#), and [511 IAC 6.1-1-2](#)) do not restrict high school "credit" to course work completed in Grades 9 through 12. Students who complete courses before entering Grade 9 may earn high school credit for those courses if each course is equivalent to its high school counterpart. The purpose of permitting flexibility is to allow students who are capable of succeeding in high school level courses to do so and to earn high school credit. It is not intended to diminish the amount or quality of work that will be completed in Grades 9 through 12. School corporations should develop policies that determine which courses may be taken for high school credit when the student is enrolled below Grade 9.

The following criteria must be met in order for a course to be completed below Grade 9 for high school credit:

1. Courses taught for high school credit before Grade 9 must be equivalent to an existing high school course, cover the same Academic Standards and be taught by a Highly Qualified Teacher.
2. Grades and credits for the course must be included on the student's high school transcript and factored into the cumulative GPA if the course will be used to meet high school diploma requirements.

The following points should be considered when deciding to offer courses for high school credit before students enter Grade 9:

- a) The academic and developmental level of the student should be considered when determining the reasonableness of a student not yet in Grade 9 enrolling in a course for high school credit. This is especially significant in Health and Physical Education since students undergo significant

physical, mental, social, and emotional growth during adolescence which might lessen the impact of these courses before Grade 9.

- b) Parents and students should be reminded that the study of mathematics in the final years of high school increases the likelihood that students will be able to register in non-remedial, credit-generating mathematics courses in college, saving time and money. College admission officers often look for evidence that students have taken certain classes—mathematics, in particular—in the final years of high school. College-bound students should not end their study of mathematics in their sophomore year. Parents and students should be made aware that there is a direct correlation between SAT and ACT scores and the number of academic courses taken in high school. Because of this all Indiana students not completing a General Diploma must complete either a mathematics or physics class in Grade 11 or 12.
- c) The purpose of allowing students to take high school courses before ninth grade is to allow them to advance to higher level mathematics courses, not to finish the entire course of study in mathematics at earlier grades. For students earning a General Diploma, mathematics courses taken before Grade 9 may not count toward the four mathematics credits required for high school graduation. Therefore, Algebra I (or higher level mathematics courses) taken before ninth grade will count as elective credits, not Mathematics credits, for students completing a General Diploma. General Diploma students must earn a minimum of four Mathematics credits, including two credits in Algebra I, in Grades 9-12. All four credits must be earned while a student is enrolled in grades 9-12.
- d) If a student completes Algebra I (or a higher level math course), a Level I World Language course, or any other high school course before Grade 9, it is a local decision whether to include those grades and credits on the high school transcript; however, any course not included on the high school transcript or not factored into the cumulative graduation GPA cannot be used to fulfill high school graduation requirements. In instances where the grades and credits for a course taken below Grade 9 are not listed on the high school transcript, students may complete additional higher level courses to meet the requirements of the Core 40 and Honors diploma (Example: A student completes Algebra I in Grade 8 but the credits and grades for the course are not listed on the high school transcript. The student may meet the Core 40 mathematics requirement in high school by earning six credits in higher level mathematics courses such as Geometry, Algebra II and Pre-calculus and taking either a mathematics or a Physics course in Grade 11 or 12.).
- e) Courses and credits that are completed before Grade 9 and that count toward the diploma requirements **must** appear on the high school transcript and factor into the cumulative graduation GPA.
- f) NCAA eligibility rules provide that courses taken before Grade 9 may not be used to satisfy core curriculum requirements for college athletic eligibility.

Questions may be addressed to Zach Foughty at the Indiana Department of Education at 317/232-6610 or zfoughty@doe.in.gov.

Revised May, 2010.